National Center *for* **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

Community School Climate Self-Assessment Tool

This instrument is organized under the five elements of climate in a community school. For each element, standards of practice – or "indicators" – are listed to provide you with clear guidelines of what contributes to a positive climate in a community school. Use the rating system described below to assess the quality of your community school's climate. Add comments as necessary.

Rating System

4   **Excellent/Exceeds Standard**
3   **Satisfactory/Meets Standard**
2   **Some Progress Made/Approaching Standard**
1   **Must Address and Improve/Standard Not Met**

I. Physical Environment

An environment that is safe, welcoming and conducive to learning	Rating				Comments
Indicators:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	
1. Space (e.g. library, media center) is shared and accessible to everyone.					
2. Staff and students are – and feel – safe everywhere on school property.					
3. Classrooms and grounds are clean and well-maintained.					
4. School equipment is maintained, up-to-date and available to students, families or community.					
5. Class size and ratio of students-to-teacher are conducive to learning.					
6. School facilities allow for co-curricular activities.					
7. Noise level is appropriate for learning and activities being conducted.					
8. Areas for instruction and activities are appropriate for those uses.					
9. School and classrooms are visible and inviting (e.g. print-rich displays and work created by students and families).					
10. School and partner staff members have sufficient books and supplies to maximize participation of all students.					
11. Clear rules and norms regarding safety and expected behavior are visually displayed throughout the school.					

II. Social Environment

An environment that promotes communication, interactions and relationship building	Rating				Comments
Indicators:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	
1. Open, honest and active communication occurs (teachers and students, teachers and parents, school and community, etc.).					
2. Teachers/staff are collegial. They support and work collaboratively around the achievement and success of the students.					
3. Student groupings are diverse.					
4. Parents and teachers/staff are partners in the educational process.					
5. Decisions are made on-site, with the participation of teachers/staff.					
6. School faculty and staff are open to suggestions (from students, families, community). All stakeholders have opportunities to participate in decision-making.					

		1	2	3	4	
7.	Families are encouraged to participate and develop relationships with the faculty and staff as well as with other families.					
8.	There are extracurricular opportunities that emphasize group work and improve ties between students.					
9.	Parents/families and community members get involved in the planning and organization of school functions.					
10.	Networks of support exist (peer mentors, clubs, family resource centers).					

III. Affective/Emotional Environment

An environment that promotes a sense of belonging and self-esteem

Indicators:		Rating				Comments
		1	2	3	4	
1.	Interactions between teachers/staff and students are caring, responsive, supportive, and respectful (also administration to staff, peer-to-peer, staff to families, etc.).					
2.	Students trust teachers and staff.					
3.	Morale is high among teachers and staff.					
4.	Staff, students and families demonstrate school pride.					
5.	The school values diversity and is welcoming to all cultures.					
6.	Teachers/staff, students and families are respected and valued.					
7.	Teachers/staff and students and families feel that they are contributing to the success of the school.					
8.	The school is respected and valued by teachers, staff, students, families and the community.					
9.	Families and community members perceive the school as warm, inviting and helpful.					
10.	Communication (language and tone) is respectful and maintains dignity of the individual (e.g., yelling vs. speaking authoritatively).					

IV. Learning/Cognitive Environment

An environment that promotes learning and self-fulfillment

Indicators:		Rating				Comments
		1	2	3	4	
1.	Expectations are high for all students. All are encouraged to succeed.					
2.	The emphasis is on student-centered learning so all types of intelligence and competence are respected and supported.					
3.	Instructional methods respect the different ways children learn.					
4.	Supportive teaching practices are consistently evident (constructive feedback, academic challenges, individual attention, encouragement for positive risk-taking and opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a variety of ways).					
5.	The ratio of students in special education is proportionate to the school population, as are allocation of resources to support learning.					
6.	Progress is monitored regularly and shared with families or partners.					
7.	Results of assessments are promptly communicated to students and parents to promote course correction and continuous improvement.					
8.	Results of assessments are used to evaluate and redesign teaching procedures and content.					
9.	Achievements and performance are rewarded, praised and publicly displayed.					
10.	Teachers or instructors demonstrate skills and knowledge to engage and motivate students and families to participate in the learning.					

#		1	2	3	4	
11.	Families are engaged to have a say and be an integral part of decision making on issues affecting their children's education.					
12.	Support for personal growth of families in terms of their knowledge of child development and parenting skills as well as their own self-esteem.					
13.	Parents and community members are welcomed and recognized as learners. Programs and services are available to meet these needs.					

V. Moral Environment

An environment that promotes values, ethical behavior and character building	Rating				Comments
Indicators:	1	2	3	4	
1. The school culture (organization's atmosphere and moral code) reflects the values, norms and expected behaviors for all youth and adults in its responsiveness to the daily tasks and operations.					
2. School and program curricula include development of knowledge/skills that promote ethical decision-making, conflict resolution, values clarification or character education.					
3. There is clear communication around procedures, positive responses or interventions on topics such as school violence, bullying or teasing, and harassment (sexual or verbal).					
4. There are established policies and rules that support behavior guidance (helping students distinguish right from wrong).					
7. Virtues (e.g. fairness, kindness, cooperation and sharing) are modeled daily by all staff.					
8. Opportunities exist for youth to:					
a. question their own moral reasoning and behavior (e.g., peer or mock court, role modeling, active reflection);					
b. adopt moral habits that will enable them to negotiate the world (e.g., punctuality, meeting deadlines, completing projects);					
c. get lessons that encourage intrinsic acceptance of pro-social values (e.g., how to treat other people, oneself, and how to regard the process of education);					
d. discuss the intentions, perspectives, false beliefs, and judgments of characters within a moral dilemma. (use contemporary issues); and					
e. connect to the strength of democracy in society by actively participating in the learning process and construct their own knowledge of social and government systems (e.g. through community service, debates, civic engagement, global citizenship, volunteer work, voter registration).					
9. Parents and schools work together: consensus about values; letters home re: classroom rules and discipline policy; join school - wide values education efforts; parents participate in moral education programs.					